

Hope by daisherz365

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Friendship, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Jonathan B., Joyce B., Nancy W., Steve H.

Pairings: Jonathan B./Nancy W.

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-02-20 20:02:33

Updated: 2017-02-20 20:02:33

Packaged: 2019-12-17 15:10:22

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,112

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Nancy Wheeler has had a good life considering the past year, but she always seems to come back to the scar on her hand and the guy who was there with her. [Alternatively, JANCY dealing with the after effects of s1 and what is coming next Halloween.]

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This was in response to a prompt fill I was requested to do last year at some point from *marthajeffersons* on tumblr, she asked: *for the jancy prompt: maybe something with their matching scars hidden into their palms? a reminder of the peculiar bond they have :)*

I finally wrote it in one sitting. I'm actually really happy with it. The new stills of Nancy and Jonathan really helped drive this one home. I hope y'all like it. I would love to hear you thoughts.

much love,

day

It hadn't been easy to let the things that had happened that year in Hawkins disappear. The scar on her hand was a firm reminder that something had occurred and there was no way of going back from this. Nancy had thought about it a few handful of times; whether she could move on? If she really wanted to.

It had felt so good to be the person to not run away scared (not completely) when it came to the things that went bumping in the night out of the corner of your eye. The monsters that as a kid parents used a figurative metaphor to get their children to behave were real. She had fought one. The first one.

She had assumed that that would be the end of it. As much as it hurt her to think that her brother's first love was lost on the other side of it, she didn't wish to revisit the trauma of losing her best friend. It didn't mean she had forgotten. It took a lot of her to even move towards the pool behind Steve's backyard during the first few months knowing that's where it had all gone wrong.

There wasn't anyone she felt comfortable with discussing it with. The boys were dealing with it in their own ways. Steve rarely discussed it, although he could see that she wanted to. She imagined it was

because it would remind him that he was another asshole for that amount of time. So she kept it to herself.

The small moments when it didn't feel so terrible was when she would see Jonathan. It was small moments where they would pass each other in the halls. They wouldn't draw much attention to it - to them - they'd just smile at each other, each of their hands curling up into a ball as if the other could feel the touch.

It moved on from there to actually touching. She found him in the corner during the prom that she and Steve had coerced him into attending although it really wasn't his scene. He was more of an observer. He felt uncomfortable. Especially when his mother had made such a big deal about him going.

"It doesn't matter who you go with. You'll want these memories Jonathan. This is your time to make a few outside of this house. Will and I will be fine." She told him as she straightened his tie for the sixth time each time not liking how it was just a bit off center.

"Okay." Was the only thing he could reply to that before she took his camera and took a few shots of him. Before he could reach out for it she was handing it off to Will to go hide until he came back.

Jonathan grumbled but promised to not be out too late even as Joyce told him that he could.

He did feel out of place. The stares he got were enough for him to wish he was a smoking type of person so that he could duck out of the gym and go sit outside despite the fact that it was a chilly night.

Nancy saved him from the cold, and the lingering stares of their peers. She grabbed his hand and pulled him to his feet. "Nancy, wha-oh you look pretty." He fumbled as he admired her face, the pearls she had in each ear and the dress that was giving him flashbacks to Christmas when he had received the new camera from her.

Nancy's mom had gone all out for the big dance. Taking her out of state to find something fit for a princess. "I'm still adjusting. My mom really went for it, ya know." She paused, realizing she was still holding his hand she quickly dropped it. "But, thanks. You clean up

nice too. I didn't know you owned a tux."

He grimaced. "I didn't. You've met my mom." He rubbed the back of his neck.

She laughed. "Of course. She's great." She paused. "I'm glad you came." She stated after a minute. "I haven't been great about keeping in touch."

He shrugged. "Don't worry about it. You're busy."

"Sometimes I wish I wasn't. Gives me more time to hang around the boys." *Gives me an excuse to see you.* She muttered silently to herself. "How about a dance?" She said suddenly, she was aware it was going to take him off guard. Jonathan fully expected her to leave him at some point and go back to Steve and his group of friends.

Steve knew that Jonathan was someone Nancy cared for, if he got jealous that was more of his problem than hers. She hadn't done anything to make it seem like she wasn't still happy with her boyfriend. This was the first step towards something new. She just wanted to see what it was like. To be with Jonathan for a single moment that didn't involve talk of monsters and hunting.

Besides they hadn't properly spoke in weeks. Joyce had been the one to pick up Will, always citing that Jonathan was busy. It had made Nancy wonder if he was avoiding her. So when the idea of prom rolled around she came over to ask him directly. *It'll be fun. one last hurrah before college. I dunno, Nancy. It's not really a welcoming crowd. Weren't you the one who didn't care about that before?* He hadn't known what to say. His mom had all but accepted it for him when she noticed him struggling to not say no to the girl that she was fully aware her eldest was in love with.
He'll be there.

Nancy had been so happy that she hugged him before leaving the Byers home.

"Dance? With you?" He pondered aloud.

"Yes. Who else would I be talking about?"

He sighed. "Alright. Just one. I'm not good at this kind of thing."

"I know. You're more The Clash, than slow dances." She quipped as she reached for his hand, the scarred one.

He drew in a deep breath as he felt her squeeze it, purposefully.

The dance with Nancy wasn't terrible he admitted as they took up the proper position of one of his hands around her waist and the other holding one of her own. She kept her eyes fixed on him the entire time. He made a smile tug onto his usually broody face.

Nancy thought the smile made him look handsome, if the way his hair was pushed back didn't already bring out his charm the smile certainly did the trick.

When the dance inevitably came to a close he dropped his hand from around her waist. "Now that wasn't so bad, eh?" She laughed.

"It was good." He mumbled as he stowed his hands into his pocket. He spotted Steve before she did.

"You aren't stealing my girl, are you?" Steve joked.

Jonathan rolled his eyes. "It was not my plan." He replied in a very deadpan sort of way. It made Steve laugh which made Nancy feel better since she hadn't been sure where the two boys stood at this point.

They were pretty amicable. She was glad.

"I had to get a smile out of him or the night wouldn't be quite as good as I hoped." Nancy told Steve who stood on her other side as the three walked off the dance floor and towards the refreshment table.

Jonathan passed them each a pre-filled plastic cup before grabbing one for himself. He was quiet as the couple threw banter back and forth. He didn't hate being around them. Nancy had a point. The dance had leveled him out a bit.

He wasn't surprised when the two were crowned King and Queen. He just nodded in acceptance of the normality of it all. Things were

meant to be this way. Or so he assumed.

Jonathan was thrown when Nancy was waiting for him after graduation, alone. He expected her to be with her family or Steve and his. His dad had made an appearance (however brief it was), his mom was chatting with Hopper as she often did now that the two were something akin to dating - he hadn't asked questions - and Will and his friends were running around the field acting like children which they were.

He was making a last walk down the hall when she barreled into him. "Hey." He caught her by the shoulders.

"Hey, yourself." She beamed.

He didn't know what to say next. He was still processing her presence so close to him. Turns out he didn't have to say anything, she just reached down for the hand and flipped his hand over. "It's almost invisible now."

"Yeah." He nodded. "It's been almost a year."

"Is it weird that I kinda miss it?"

Jonathan wasn't sure how to answer that. He wouldn't want to go back to not having his little brother around. He was already going to miss him when he was in college - by some miracle he obtained a scholarship and was headed to New York - if he had to do it all over again he'd only be willing to change one thing.

"Not Will missing, but the opportunity that we did something awesome that no one knows about but us." She traced the pattern in his palm. He instinctively started to pull away even though his heart was beating fast in his chest.

Nancy held a firm grip. "That's what makes it memorable. We're still here is enough."

"I try to think that way but then I remember what else happened...Barb and Eleven. I don't know if I'm okay with that."

"You're not." He told her. He had noticed the uncertainty in her eyes.

It wasn't just today. In passing he noticed it.

He opted to switching their positions. He took his hand away and grabbed her scarred one. "I think it's okay to not be okay. It means you're not who I assumed you were when we started all of this. You feel things. That's good. But we can't want to be in that place again. It wasn't warmth, it was terror."

"*You feels things*. What do you suspect that might be?"

"Sadness. Wanderlust. Guilt."

She had almost forgotten how sharp his tongue could be when he got frustrated. She didn't jerk away from him though. She had started them on this path. They'd continue down it until things were settled.

"What do you feel?" She asked him instead of responding to his description.

"You tell me." He smiled.

"Worry. Sadness. Hope." She said, curling her fingers around his that were poised in the center of her palm. "Hold on to the hope for the both of us." She whispered.

He said nothing. He never knew how to take her words. Words could mean anything, or nothing at all. It didn't mean she couldn't strike him either.

Hope for what? He wanted to ask. Instead he bent down pressed his mouth to her cheek. He only lingered for at least ten seconds but to Nancy it felt like at least a minute.

When he raised his head he looked determined. "Hope, I can do that. What about you?"

She swallowed, looking at him in the same way she did when they sat side by side in her bedroom the previous year.

"Yeah. Okay."

The following Halloween everything changed. They gravitated

towards one another as their world turned on it's head. Nancy visited that moment in the hallway during this second year of hell. It was her hope, as was the set of scars that she shared with the determined man she had come to accept as her better half.